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SENSITIVE

FOR AMBASSADOR JEFFREY BADER FROM AMBASSADOR CAMERON HUME

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SUBJECT: Opportunity for President Obama to Address World Islamic
Economic Forum

REF: A) Jakarta 136; B) Jakarta 54

11. (SBU) Conference organizers for the 5th World Islamic Economic Forum held in Jakarta on March 2-3 have requested that President Obama deliver taped video remarks during the Forum's opening ceremony. The Forum's key themes are the global financial crisis, alternative energy, and food security. Indonesian President Yudhoyono will deliver opening remarks and be joined by other Muslim and non-Muslim economic and political leaders, including Malaysian Prime Minister Badawi, during the Forum.

12. (SBU) No formal invitation has been sent yet, but conference organizers have reiterated their interest in having President Obama speak via taped video remarks (ref A). A senior advisor to Forum co-chairman, State-Owned Enterprises Minister Sofyan Djalil, told us on February 23 that Minister Djalil would be willing to send a letter of invitation as co-chairman to President Obama.

13. (SBU) A request from President Yudhoyono to President Obama to speak to this group is unlikely. Tri Sukma "Nanu" Djandam, an advisor to the President on international affairs, told us on February 23 that President Yudhoyono does not want to press President Obama to address the World Islamic Economic Forum. Nanu said the President decided not to co-sign the letter as he was very pleased with Secretary Clinton's visit and had reiterated his invitation for President Obama to visit in November. Given this, Yudhoyono did not want to press President Obama with another invitation at this point. This information contradicts discussions with Presidential advisor Dino Djalal in early January (ref B).

14. (SBU) If President Obama would like to speak to the Forum by video tape, Embassy Jakarta will work with the conference organizers to make appropriate arrangements.

15. (SBU) Forum background: The World Islamic Economic Forum is an outgrowth of economic meetings at the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Designed as a "mini" Davos, the Forum brings together Muslim and non-Muslim political and business leaders to discuss critical economic issues and showcase investment opportunities in the Muslim world. Malaysian Prime Minister Badawi (a founding member of the Forum), the Crown Prince of the UAE, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar are confirmed participants. Islamic Development Bank President, Qatar Islamic Bank Chairman, HSBC Amanah CEO, and other business leaders are also slated to attend. Caterpillar and Coca Cola are both sponsors and are sending representatives. The U.S.-ASEAN Business Council is also soliciting further participation by its members.

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